(d) and (e) An Expert Committee had, *inter-alia*, recommended certain modifications for the operation of longwall system at Seetalpur. Despite implementation of the suggested modifications, the desired level of production could not be achieved. Adverse geo-mining conditions prevented continued deployment of the available longwall equipment. Since these were beyond anybody's control, the question of accountability did not arise.

Dhemomain Colliery Project

6738. SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that much damage was caused to the Dhemomain Colliery Project of the Coal India Limited due to mishandling and negative views about the same;

(b) whether it is also a fact that two of the imported Dosco roadheader machines costing more than rupees two crores were drowned underground in 1991 and no effort was thereafter made to recover the equipment;

(c) whether the CIL had not expected the situation as it prevailed after the purchase of imported equipment;

(d) whether the project has since been abandoned; and

(e) if so, the facts and details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) and (b) Two imported Dosco Road Headers costing Rs. 1.2 crores were submerged underground in 1991. In spite of all efforts made to recover the submerged equipment, these could not be recovered till-date as the site where these equipment have submergd is as yet unapproachable. Efforts to recover these equipment are still continuing.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) and (e) No, Sir. Does not arise.

Sponsorship scheme in Coal Sector

6739. SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a large sponsorship scheme meant for middlemen and the actual consumers do not get advantage of this scheme;

(b) whether Government are aware that State Governments where the coal mines are located are agitated over the denial of sponsorship scheme i.e. denial of supply to small scale industries, Int Bhatta industries, etc.; and

(c) whether Government are considering to give priority to sponsorship system which was involved several years ago and now it has been abandoned?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) and (b) Coal supplies are arranged by the coal companies on the basis of sponsorships or linkages or both. The requirements of actual users receive priority with regard to supply of coal even under Liberalised Sales Scheme. Coal supplies to small users through their nominated agencies/Samitis/Associations etc. are also arranged on the basis of supporting lists of actual users who would be supplied coal by them. The accompanying list of actual users is required to be endorsed by the sponsoring authorities.

(c) The system of sponsorships is in vogue and has not been abandoned.